REMARKS

At the outset, Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. Applicant have received and carefully reviewed the contents of the November 30, 2006 Office Action.

The specification has been amendment to correct a minor informality and no new matter has been added.

Claims 12-14 are hereby added. Accordingly, claims 1-14 are currently pending. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

The Applicants thank the Examiner for taking the time to speak with the Applicants' Representative on March 28, 2007 and March 30, 2007. The substance of the interviews is set forth in the Remarks and constitutes a record of the interview. We discussed the Restriction Requirement with regard to the amendment to claim 8 presented in the response filed August 10, 2006. In addition, the Applicants' Representative pointed out that the election included in the August 10, 2006 submission was made with traverse. The Examiner acknowledged that the election was made with traverse and agreed to mail a supplemental Office Action properly indicating the traversal.

The Office Action indicates that the election of Group 1, which includes claims 1-7 was made without traverse. As previously discussed, the election was made with traverse. The Examiner acknowledged that the restriction was made with traverse and will be mailing a supplemental Office Action in due course. In addition, the Office Action fails to address claims 8-11, however it appears that these claims have been withdrawn from consideration.

During the telephone interview of March 30, 2007, the Examiner indicated that the Restriction Requirement will be maintained and claims 8-11 will be withdrawn from consideration. The Examiner alleged that claims 8-11, previously indicated as Group II, are drawn to the process of controlling a washing machine which has a different classification than Group I. In addition, the Examiner alleged that the process described in claim 8 did not require

all the structures included in elected claim 1. For all the above reasons, the Examiner indicated that the search required for Group II would be different than the search required for Group I thereby causing an undue burden on the Examiner. Applicants respectfully disagree.

The fact that Group I and Group II may be classified differently, in and of itself is not enough to require restriction. Moreover, whether or not the process includes all of the structure included in the washing machine of claim 1 is not enough for the restriction to be maintained. Rather, it must be shown that the process of using the washing machine as claimed can be practiced with another materially different product or that the washing machine as claimed can be used in a materially different process. See MPEP 806.05(h). The Applicants respectfully request the Examiner provide an example of another materially different product in which the process of claim 8 can be practiced or another materially different process that can be used in the washing machine of claim 1. Absent such an example, the Applicants request the Restriction Requirement be withdrawn and claims 8-11 rejoined and considered.

Moreover, the Office Action rejects claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US 2002/0050011 to Cho *et al.* (hereinafter "*Cho*"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

As required by Chapter 2143.03 of the M.P.E.P., in order to establish *prima facie* obviousness of the claimed invention, all the limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. Applicants respectfully submit that the cited references fail to disclose all the elements recited in claims 1-7.

Specifically, independent claim 1 recites a washing machine comprising, among other features, "a microcomputer for sensing an amount of laundry based on at least an integration value derived from the voltage signal output from the pulse sensor." *Cho* does not teach or suggest this feature; therefore, it cannot, by itself render claim 1 obvious.

As stated in Chapter 2111 of the MPEP, "during patent examination, the pending claims must be 'given their broadest reasonable interpretation consistent with the specification.'" However, the Examiner's interpretation of "sensing an amount of laundry based on ... an integration value derived from the voltage signal output from said pulse sensor" is unreasonable. One skilled in the art would understand the term "integration value" to be a value derived through integration -- a well known mathematical operation. In the case of claim 1, integration involves the voltage signal output from a pulse sensor.

There is nothing in *Cho* that suggests integration is employed in determining the amount of laundry. In *Cho*, the laundry amount is detected by measuring the amount of time it takes for a speed detection signal to equal a reference speed, where time is most likely measured using a counter – although *Cho* does not disclose how it actually measures time. Likewise, speed is most likely measured by counting the number of drum rotations over a fixed interval – although, once again, *Cho* does not actually disclose how it measures speed. Cho then compares the measured amount of time with previously stored reference times. *See Paragraphs 0078 and 0079.* Each of the previously stored references times is associated with a corresponding laundry amount. In other words, Cho uses a lookup table approach to determine the amount of laundry.

Even if one were to broadly interpret claim 1, it is unreasonable to interpret the lookup table approach in *Cho* with an integration process. Moreover, even if one were to interpret the lookup table approach in *Cho* as an integration, which it is not, *Cho* still fails to teach or disclose deriving the integration value from a voltage signal output from a pulse sensor.

For at least the reasons set forth above, claim 1 is patentable over *Cho*, as are claims 2, 3, 6 and 7 which depend from 1. Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection.

The application in condition for allowance. Early, favorable action is respectfully solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

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Respectfully submitted,

By Michael K. Angert (Reg. No. 46,522)
for **Mark R. Kresloff**
Registration No.: 42,766
McKENNA LONG & ALDRIDGE LLP
1900 K Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20006
(202) 496-7500
Attorneys for Applicant